

Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

Contents

- TickerTape
- COVID-19
- Standing up for what he believed
- Emergency road closure in Teddington
- Twickenham Riverside and the Elgin Marbles
- Richmond Film Society- Competition
- Life is like a ...Christmas Tree
- Twickers Foodie
- Review
- Traveller's Tales
- WIZ Tales: Chad

Contributors

- Simon Fowler
- Richmond Film Society
- Alison Jee
- Mark Aspen
- Deep Patel
- Doug Goodman
- World InfoZone
- St Mary's University
- NPL
- Brentford FC
- NAPB
- WHO
- GB News
- LBRuT

Editors

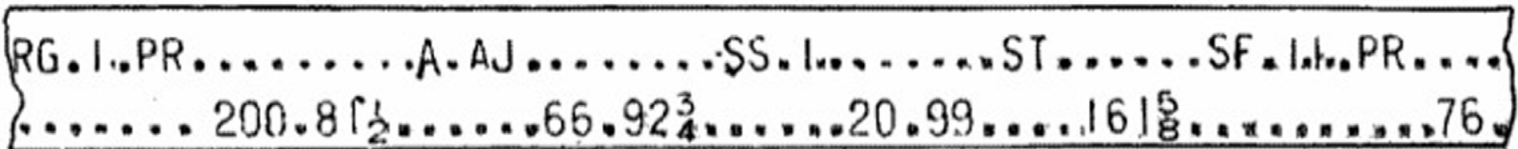
Berkley Driscoll
Teresa Read



6th January 2023

T&RT

Parakeet feeding time, Strawberry Hill
Photo by Berkley Driscoll



TickerTape - News in Brief

Weekend travel information

January national rail strike action

Most TfL services, including most of the Tube, are planned to run on each strike day. However, we expect there to be some disruption on the London Overground, Elizabeth line, Circle line and parts of the Bakerloo and District lines on the following dates:

- **Friday 6 and Saturday 7 January**

Services on the morning of **Sunday 8 January** may also be disrupted.

If you're travelling, plan ahead and check before you travel for the latest information on how services are running. For full information on services expected to run, [visit the strike page](#).

Bus strikes

Strikes on Abellio bus services are expected on dates in January, which will affect routes mostly in west and south London.

For details on other dates affected, [visit the strike page](#).

If you're travelling, [plan ahead](#) and [check before you travel](#) for the latest information on how services are running.

London Underground

District line: Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 January

No service between Earl's Court and Whitechapel/Kensington (Olympia) and no service between Edgware Road and High Street Kensington

Use alternative Tube, rail or local bus routes.

London Overground

Sunday 8 January

No service between Richmond and Camden Road (via West Hampstead)

South Western Railway

Saturday 7 January

STRIKE DAY – severely reduced service latest info [here](#)

Sunday 8 January

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Covid-19

By Teresa Read

World Health Organization

COVID-19 Weekly Epidemiological Update, Data as of 1 January 2023

Globally, more than 3 million new cases and 10,000 deaths have been reported in the week of 26 December 2022 to 1 January 2023. This represents a reduction in weekly cases and deaths of 22% and 12%, respectively. However, those trends need to be interpreted considering the reduction in testing and delays in reporting in many countries during the year-end holiday season.

At the country level, the highest numbers of new weekly cases were reported from Japan (946,130 new cases; -18%), the Republic of Korea (45,745 new cases; -3%), the United States of America (393,587 new cases; -21%), China (218,019 new cases; +45%), and Brazil (206,944 new cases; -19%). The highest numbers of new weekly deaths were reported from the United States of America (2,501 new deaths; -14%), Japan (1,941 new deaths; -3%), Brazil (1,110 new deaths; +19%), France (803 new deaths; similar to the previous week), and China (648 new deaths; +48%).

Data should be interpreted with caution as several countries have progressively changed COVID-19 testing strategies, resulting in lower numbers of tests performed and consequently lower numbers of cases detected

European Region

The European Region reported just under 549,000 new cases, a 43% decrease as compared to the previous week. Four (7%) of the 61 countries for which data are available reported increases in new cases of 20% or greater, with the highest proportional increases observed in Kyrgyzstan (10 vs four new cases; +150%), Kosovo (35 vs 18 new cases; +94%), and Malta (167 vs 133 new cases; +26%). The highest numbers of new cases were reported from France (156,133 new cases; 240.1 new cases per 100,000; -48%), Germany (149,260 new cases; 179.5 new cases per 100,000; -35%), and Italy (83,202 new cases; 139.5 new cases per 100,000; -37%).

The number of new weekly deaths in the region decreased by 29% as compared to the previous week, with 2,866 new deaths reported. The highest numbers of new deaths were reported from France (803 new deaths; 1.2 new deaths per 100,000; similar number of deaths reported the previous week), Italy (474 new deaths; <1 new death per 100,000; -41%), and the Russian Federation (379 new deaths; <1 new death per 100,000; -1%).

IN THE NEWS

Aljazeera: As China cases surge, countries test airline wastewater for COVID

Experts say testing wastewater from flights from China will help identify new variants that might emerge

South China Morning Post: Top engineers and scientists dying at an unprecedented rate in China after lifting of Covid controls

SKY News: What is known about the XBB.1.5 COVID variant and what's behind the nickname 'kraken'?

The World Health Organisation has warned the new COVID variant XBB.1.5 is the "most transmissible yet", with the "recombinant" new strain of Omicron nicknamed "kraken" - but what does that all mean, and how worried should people be?

ITV News: Could Omicron subvariant nicknamed 'the Kraken' bring a new Covid wave to UK?

NBC News: What is the XBB.1.5 subvariant? CDC reports a new strain of omicron taking over in the U.S.

Happy New Year from



The Tree Agency

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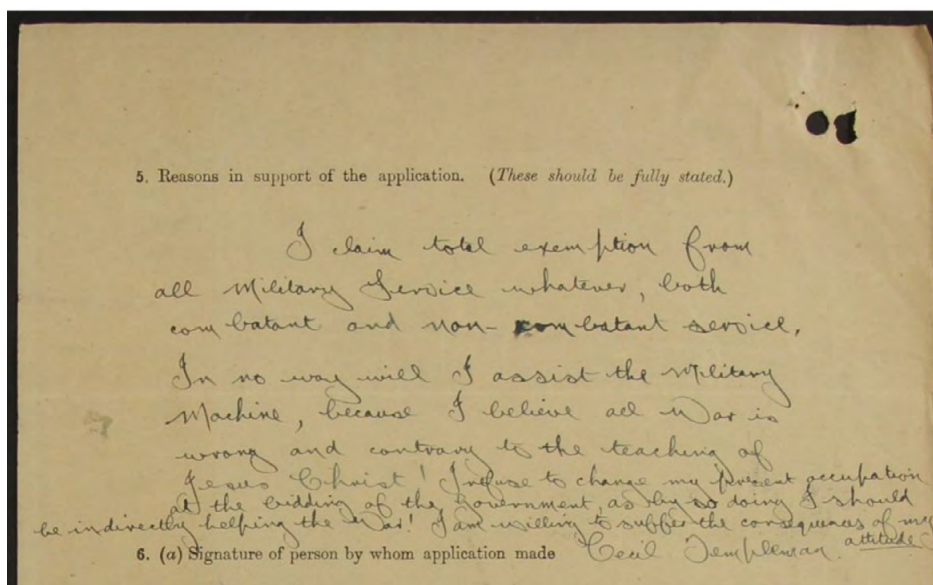
The Tree Agency

Standing up for what he believed

Around 16,000 men refused to take up arms or fight during the First World War for any number of religious, moral, ethical or political reasons. They were known as conscientious objectors.

At least one Twickenham man was among their numbers. Cecil Templeman a twenty-year old draper's clerk who lived in Heath Gardens.

After conscription was introduced in March 1916, men who did not wish to serve could appeal to a tribunal made up of local worthies. Cecil told the local tribunal: 'in no way will I assist the military machine, because I believe all war is wrong and contrary to the teaching of Jesus Christ'. The appeal was rejected, but Templeman took his case to the Middlesex County Tribunal, Templeman stated that he was prepared to suffer the consequences, even imprisonment, should this appeal be refused. It was



Credit TNA MH 47/8/96

disallowed because in the eyes of the Tribunal he had not made a strong enough case for exemption, as he was neither a member of a church nor another organisation with pacifist beliefs.

Cecil Templeman was arrested on 2 April 1916, after ignoring his call-up. Police Sergeant Bridgeman told the local magistrates that when approached, Cecil said 'all right' and had come quietly. His lawyer asked for the case to be referred to the High Court as a result. It made no difference. Templeman was taken from the court under military guard.

Two weeks later Templeman was court-martialled by the Army. Templeman was sentenced to one year imprisonment which was commuted to 112 days. He was discharged from the army with disgrace.

But this did mean he could return to his civilian occupation. For the rest of the war Cecil was sent to a work centre where conscientious objectors could stay and work for the remainder of their sentences. Templeman spent time at the one at Dartmoor Prison.

By mid-1918 he was working at the Iron Construction Works in Isleworth. In August he appeared before Brentford police court accused of being a deserter. Cecil protested that he had been discharged from the services. The police claimed that he changed addresses without authority.

The court found that he was an absentee. At this stage Cecil clearly lost his rag: 'I am in the right! For God's sake, say I am in the right!' He then took off one of his shoes: 'and hurled it at the Bench, but it struck the rail in front of the chairman and fell to the ground.' Still struggling violently two warrant officers 'hustled him downstairs to the cells.'

We don't know what happened to Cecil. Most conscientious objectors were released in the months after the Armistice. By 1939 he was living in Hampton.

Based on a blog by Catherine Williams <https://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/conscription-conscience-twickenham/>

Emergency road closure in Teddington

Kingston Road in Teddington (TW11) is closed between Ferry Road and Kingston Roundabout, due to a sink hole.

Diversions are in place, but please consider alternative routes to avoid heavy traffic. The sinkhole has been caused by a Thames Water main-pipe failure. Thames Water have now taken over the site and will be delivering repairs and determining timeframes for the work.

Timeframes are still to be confirmed, but Kingston Road will remain closed over the weekend of 7-8 January into Monday 9 January. A further update will be given on Monday.

Waste and recycling collections

Collections on Kingston Road will not be impacted while works are undertaken.

If you have a missed collection, please report this as normal.

[Christmas and New Year collection schedules](#) still apply for Friday 6 and Saturday 7 January. Christmas tree collections run until Friday 13 January.

Traffic diversions

Residential access remains on Kingston Road however there is no vehicular traffic access between 237 Kingston Road and Holmesdale Road.

Southbound traffic is being diverted at the junction of Ferry Road and Kingston Road. Traffic can go left or right at this diversion.

Northbound traffic is being diverted at Kingston Roundabout onto Hampton Court Road and via Church Grove.

Bus diversions

Routes 281 and 285 towards Kingston are on diversion via Park Road, Sandy Lane, Park Road, Church Grove and Hampton Court Road due to damage to the carriageway at Kingston Road and will be unable to serve the stops from 'Marston Road' (P) to 'Fairfax Road' (E). Please allow extra time for your journey.

Routes 281 and 285 towards Teddington are on diversion via Hampton Court Road, Church Grove, Park Road, Sandy Lane and Park Road due to damage to the carriageway at Kingston Road. Buses will be unable to serve the stops from 'Lower Teddington Road' (A) to 'Elmfield Avenue' (D). Please allow extra time for your journey.

Pedestrian access

Pedestrian access is open on both sides of the route. Cyclists are required to dismount near the works area.

The Co-op and neighbouring shops are accessible by foot.

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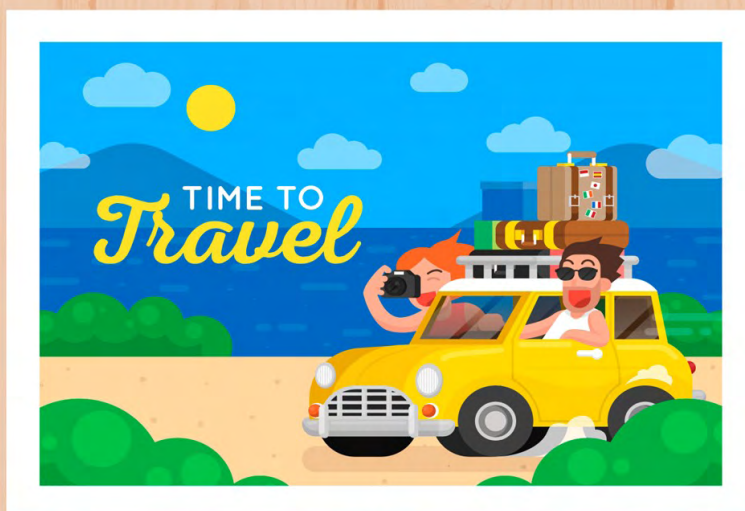
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to: _____

Manor Road roadworks postponed

Due to the ongoing repair works to the [sinkhole on Kingston Road](#), these roadworks have been postponed until the sinkhole repairs are completed and Kingston Road is fully reopened.

Timelines for the repair works on Kingston Road are currently unconfirmed.

The works being undertaken on Manor Road (TW11) as part of the A310 Strawberry Vale pedestrian and cycling improvements were due to start on 9 January 2023.

The roadworks were expected to remain on site until the end of May 2023.

The works will involve a southbound road closure, with a diversion along Waldegrave Road and High Street. Northbound traffic will remain unaffected.

There are currently road signs on site reporting the works.

Residents and schools in the area will be notified early next week of any disruption in the area.

Find out more information on the [improvement scheme and traffic arrangements](#).

If you have any questions you can email roadworks.manorroad@richmond.gov.uk.



TWICKENHAM RIVERSIDE AND THE ELGIN MARBLES

- **British Museum confirms talks over Parthenon Marbles**
- **Sky News: Elgin Marbles: What are they and how did they end up in the British Museum?**

Twickenham Riverside has an illustrious history, the home of the rich and famous, including well-known names at the moment – Elgin and Middleton, former Richmond House inhabitants.



RICHMOND HOUSE, Twickenham Riverside:

Martha, Countess of Elgin (1739-1810)

Martha, Countess of Elgin was the daughter of Thomas Whyte and married Charles Bruce, 5th Earl of Elgin, in 1759. He was a founder member of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews, so maybe she was one of the earliest “golf widows”.

Martha, Dowager Countess of Elgin died in Richmond House in 1810 and is buried in St Mary the Virgin’s Church in Twickenham. Her gravestone is on the floor just inside the Church doors but sadly 200 years of worshippers’ feet have rendered it illegible.

Her son Thomas Bruce, the 7th Earl of Elgin, married the richest heiress in Scotland, Mary Nisbet. Elgin was appointed the Ambassador Extraordinaire to the Ottoman Empire; during the time they were in that region his wife’s charm and her considerable wealth enabled him to remove and ship to England the classical marbles of the Parthenon in Athens, known as the Elgin Marbles. To offset his debts, Elgin in 1816, sold the Marbles to the British Government for £35,000. Poor Lord Elgin had felt that he had done the right thing by saving the Marbles from destruction, but died a bitter man, in debt.

Information from Richmond House, a Richmond Environmental Information Centre (REIC) publication with thanks to Sue and Jeremy Hamilton-Miller.

Richmond House is part of a Richmond Environmental Information Centre project entitled Memories of Twickenham Riverside, which is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund

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memories of twickenham riverside
www.memoriesoftwickenhamriverside.com

reic richmond environmental information centre
www.reic.uk.com

Richmond House and its inhabitants

Richmond Film Society - Competition

RICHMOND FILM SOCIETY COMPETITION

The second half of Richmond Film Society's 59th season of World Cinema commences at The Exchange on 10 January and runs until 20 June. Win a pair of tickets for any film of your choice.

Competition Question

'Penélope Cruz is the only Spanish actress to win an Academy Award - is that (1) True or (2) False ?

Please send your answers to win@twickenhamtribune.com , placing your answer in the email subject line. Correct answers will be drawn to determine the winning entry after the closing date of 13 January.

The 2023 films comprise the following:

2023

10 Jan	Everything Went Fine (France/Belgium)
24 Jan	Quo Vadis, Aida (Bosnia)
7 Feb	The 400 Blows (France)
21 Feb	The Quiet Girl (Ireland)
7 Mar	The Collini Case (Germany)
21 Mar	Happening (France)
4 Apr	Azor (Argentina)
18 Apr	Memories of Murder (South Korea)
2 May	Bergman Island (Sweden)
16 May	Beanpole (Russia)
30 May	The Good Boss (Spain)
20 Jun	Summer Film (to be confirmed)

Although membership is closed, 60 non-member tickets are available for each screening at **£5** (£3 for full-time students) and can be purchased in advance from The Exchange's Box Office - in person, by telephone on 020 8240 2399 or online at <http://exchangetwickenham.co.uk/events/>

Remaining non-member tickets on the night of screenings can be purchased from The Exchange's box office on the ground floor by contactless payment only.

For further information on RFS or the films, see <http://www.richmondfilmsoc.org.uk>



LIFE IS LIKE A... ...CHRISTMAS TREE?

By Deep Patel



We are all so familiar with the good old Christmas tree...the centre piece of our homes during the festive season that has just passed us by...a reminder of the magic of Christmas that we knew so well from our childhoods...the twinkle of the lights, the glint of baubles and the smell of tinsel overheating on the fairy lights (don't act like you've never smelt it too!)...but what has made me write such a bold statement today insinuating that "life is like a Christmas tree"...have I finally lost the plot? (although, my family would tell you that I never had the plot in the first place)...but read on...and you too will see how life really is like a Christmas tree...then tell me whether you agree with me...or whether you think I have now truly lost my mind.

Life starts for the Christmas tree as a young plant that grows slowly and steadily over time... much like we do (most of us, although we all know a few people who never seem to learn, grow up or develop...you know what I am talking about). As time passes, the tree will grow to become a beautiful, strong tree...just as we grow to become beautiful, strong human beings (although we all know a few humans who manage to stay at the difficult to manage, needy sapling stage...don't act like you don't know what I am talking about...you do know!).

Here's the morally questionable part...next, the tree is murdered, taken from its home, chopped up and its dead body sold to families to be adorned with what are mostly garish decorations soon to become a centre piece in pride of position in our homes, the dead carcass lit up and over-priced indulgent presents stuffed under it to celebrate a time of the year that is meant to be about sacrifice and kindness...hmmmmmm. Okay, I am starting to sound a little bit dark...but you cannot deny what I have written is true right?!

But the focus of this article was not to look at the morality of murdering adult trees for the sake of a few weeks of decoration, but more about how on earth our lives can compare to the lives of Christmas trees...what can Christmas trees teach us humans about life?...

Well here it is...the reality...in its rawness...grab a cup of tea and biscuit...and read on...

We take a bare tree home and adorn it with all types of beautiful ornaments and splendors (or garish plastic tat in some cases). We gently encircle the tree with glittering fairy lights, dazzling tinsel and shining bright baubles...a star or fairy delicately and proudly placed at the very top tip of the beautiful tree. All else aside, the tree in this state does look absolutely breathtaking and so incredibly beautiful that some men I know prefer to sit and look at their Christmas trees more so than their wives faces, and vice versa of course with wives preferring to look at their trees rather than their husbands faces)...

The scene is set...the tree brings the feeling of Christmas magic to our otherwise plain (and often rather dull) homes...on Christmas day morning the spotlight is on the Christmas tree as we wake up and marvel at the many beautifully wrapped presents under the tree (or lack of in my case). For the next 12 days, the tree is safe...enjoyed each night as we sit and watch repeats of The Vicar of Dibley, Only Fools and Horses Christmas Special, Mary Poppins and Home Alone 2...the tree is given the highest respect of all decorations in our homes...then the 12th day after Christmas comes...

On the 12th day after Christmas, the tree is stripped of all its ornaments, the fairy lights are yanked off without attention for damaging the trees branches and what was once the heart of our home becomes the rubbish that we now want to get rid and out of our homes...The tree that was so celebrated during it's time is dragged across our driveways and dumped out on the streets or by the bins, bare, dried and in the cold...awaiting being chopped up into one thousand pieces and mulched up by the lovely council of Twickenham...

So there we have it...and you thought the royals were suffering at the moment... the life and struggles of the humble Christmas tree are something to really think about...We may be in the prime of our lives, friends, fame, wealth, beauty, popularity and loved by all (just like the tree on Christmas day) but it is worth always remaining humble, knowing that in this life, anyone's time can come when they are turned from the king to the beggar, from the adorned heart of Christmas to a squashed up mound next to the dustbin on the streets...no one is invincible, so we must always remember..."life is like a Christmas tree"...stay humble, be kind to each other and perform good deeds and random acts of kindness...no matter how big or small...it's all good karma!



Kindness in all its forms, helping each other and all the life forms on this beautiful planet we call home... As I always say, we are not the only inhabitants of this beautiful planet and there is a kind way for everything... If you have rodent issues, consider live capture traps where you can catch the rodents alive and release them in woodland or parkland areas far from homes. Try electronic high-frequency sound deterrents (check online for ones with good reviews and ones that are safe for your pets if you have any). Put empty jam jar lids filled with white vinegar all around areas where you don't want them to stop them without harming them (they HATE the smell of white vinegar). This also works for foxes, squirrels, mice and rabbits. Just picking up a slug off a pavement with a leaf and moving it over a wall counts as a good deed... choosing a kind way to stop ants (like talcum powder around where they come but not on them) counts as a good deed. Avoid sweeping/washing the garden patio too often to help save countless tiny almost invisible little lives that live there (particularly under large pots in the garden, hence I say gently lift the pots if you need to move them rather than dragging them to avoid crushing little lives).

As I always say...the true key to our own happiness lies in the happiness of other life forms...until the next time...have a lovely week ahead and look after the smaller life forms and the universe will look after you. For further tips, check out my Facebook page "Kind World". As always...Peace, love and good karma to all Xx

Remember... "Life is Like a Christmas Tree"...

Government introduces voter ID requirement

From May, the UK government will require voters to show photo ID at the polling station.

This new requirement will be enforced for the first time in England at the local elections on Thursday 4 May 2023. Note there are no local elections currently scheduled for 2023 in Richmond upon Thames.

The requirement applies to all local elections and referendums.

The requirement for voter ID to be provided at UK Parliamentary General elections will only take effect for polls after 5 October 2023.

Which forms of ID can I use to vote?

The following forms of photo ID are acceptable:

- Passport issued by the UK, any Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, A British Overseas Territory, an EEA state or a Commonwealth country
- Driving licence issued by the UK, any Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or an EEA state
- Biometric immigration document
- Identity card bearing Proof of Age Standards Scheme hologram (a PASS card)
- Ministry of Defence Form 90 (Defence Identity Card)
- Blue Badge
- National Identity Card issued by an EEA state
- Older Person's Bus Pass
- Disabled Person's Bus Pass
- Oyster 60+ Card
- Freedom Pass

Expired photographic identification documents can still be used as accepted photographic ID at the polling station, as long as the photograph is still a good likeness of the elector.

If you would like more information on which forms of photo ID will be accepted, visit [The Electoral Commission](#) or call their helpline on 0800 328 0280.



What to do if you do not have an accepted form of photo ID

If you do not have the appropriate photo ID you will be able to apply for a VAC from the [Voter Authority Certificate Service](#) from early in 2023.

The Voter Authority Certificate cannot be used as proof of identity for any other purpose than for voting.

Alternatively, you can complete a paper application form and send this to the electoral services team at:
Electoral Services
York House Stable Block
Richmond Road
Twickenham
TW1 3AA

Before you request a paper application, you must be registered to vote or have made an application to register to vote. You can either [register online](#) or we can send a voter registration form with the Voter Authority Certificate application.

You must also provide a suitable photograph with your application. If you require any help with applying for a Voter Authority Certificate or want to request an application form, contact electoral.services@richmond.gov.uk.

Find out more

If you have any questions or would like to find out more, visit [The Electoral Commission](#), or call their helpline on 0800 328 0280.

Room for Work charity offers career support for Richmond residents

Whether you're looking to re-enter the workplace or seeking a career change, local charity Room for Work are offering free career support.

This January, the charity will present two free career development courses for Richmond residents.

The Room for Work programme specialises in tailored, one-to-one mentoring provided by experts as well as personal career coaching.

Job searching can be a lonely activity. With the Room for Work format, you will be with likeminded people, using the power of community to build motivation and confidence.

The programme is for jobseekers aged 45 and over, with work experience ranging from administrative to managerial and professional roles.

To attend, participants will need:

- A laptop or tablet
- Access to the web
- A good working knowledge of English
- Basic computer skills



The 12-week course will take place in two locations in Richmond.

Hampton Wick event details:

- **Dates:** Monday 9 January to Friday 17 March
- **Time:** 10.30am to 1pm
- **Location:** The Warehouse, St John's, Church Grove, Hampton Wick, KT1 4AL

Richmond Town Centre event details:

- **Dates:** Tuesday 10 January to Saturday 18 March
- **Time:** 10am to 12.30pm
- **Location:** Duke Street Richmond TW9 1DH

Find out more [information about the course or reserve a place](#).

Alternatively, Richmond Council's Work Match service offer the Room for Work programme which takes place virtually. The course is delivered online in 12 sessions over 6 weeks.

The Work Match service supports residents with follow up job searches.

[Find out more about Work Match](#).



CHALKING UP A SUCCESS

It was a bitterly (and I mean bitterly) cold night when we ventured into Richmond to check out a new wine and cocktail bar that had been recommended to us. Tucked away in Duke Street, **Chalk** has been open since February last year and, judging by how busy it was the other evening, has been a rather well-kept Richmond secret! It looked cosy and welcoming, with candles flickering on the tables, chalkboards on the walls, and a relaxed, 'local' vibe. Inside there was a lovely atmosphere with a mix of couples, plus one or two larger groups clearly enjoying themselves.



Having been shown to our table by Lauren, we perused the cocktail menu (after all it is a cocktail and wine bar!). I can never resist a Negroni, but Lauren's colleague Eric persuaded me to try an Acorn & Rosehip, (Chalk's take on a Negroni, but using the Acorn & Rosehip distillate that is made on the premises). It really hit the spot: autumnal, bitter and warming, despite being served over the largest single ice cube I've seen! My husband was steered to the PB&J using Peanut Butter distillate, Strawberry Bourbon whiskey, Barbados rum, Creme de Framboise and bitters. I had a tiny sip and it was sensational: not a subtle hint of peanut butter. "A man's cocktail," declared my husband!

Chalk's food menu is very much charcuterie/delicatessen focused. We enjoyed a few mixed olives, some wonderfully large Moroccan caperberries and some delicious Puglian onions with our cocktails while chatting with Eric, who explained the philosophy of Chalk: Chalk aims to champion interesting, unique and delicious drinks in a simple, unpretentious way. It might be a glass of Chin Chin Vinho Verde from Quinta do Emizio in Northern Portugal, or the uplifting Natsu cocktail featuring Chalk's home-distilled yuzu juice. Apparently, Chalk's co-founders - Becky Downing and Adam Lock - plan to open in multiple London boroughs and their ambition is for Chalk to become the UK's number one premium cocktail and wine bar brand. Becky is an award-winning start-up founder and 'serial entrepreneur' and Adam Lock spent six years as Bar Manager of The Groucho Club in Soho. Adam was also part of the team that famously created the breathable Gin & Tonic cloud during his time with multi-sensory experience gurus Bompas & Parr, and says: "Each cocktail has been individually created in Chalk's own laboratory. Cocktails include home-distilled spirits such as Peanut Butter Rum, Acorn & Rosehip Gin and Geranium Flower Vodka. There is a focus on using seasonal ingredients in the most sustainable way."



Becky believes that curating an interesting wine list is paramount. *“Chalk is all about discovery and enjoying new and interesting wines that taste delicious. We collaborate with artisan growers who work their vineyards using organic and biodynamic practices. All of them have an interesting story to tell. These farmers are truly passionate about what they do and work intensively in the vineyard to produce wines that reflect the conditions of the land and the fruit of every different vintage,”* says Becky.

There are 22 wines by the glass (with prices starting from a very reasonable £5 for 125ml), with a focus on natural wines and smaller producers, I was delighted to note that a champagne I had recently been introduced to, **Frerejean Frères**, was well represented and I couldn't resist the offer of a glass of the Rose Premier Cru. This delightful champagne was sensibly priced at £15 (125ml) and I thoroughly enjoyed its fine stream of bubbles, red fruit aromas and notes of freshly baked brioche. This relatively new champagne house was founded in 2005 by three members of the Taittinger family who, having sold the original family champagne business, now focus on producing champagne from Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grapes (some from root stock nearly a century old) using their family heritage, and a fresh approach, to uphold traditional methods. It's a name to look out for!



We opted to share a standard Ploughman's board (available in standard or large - two meats, two cheeses, bread pickles and chutney, or three meats and cheeses respectively at £18 or £28). We chose Cashel Blue and chevre, plus Soppressata and Bressola. As well as sourdough bread we were given crackers and it was quite a spread. The sad thing was that the cheese was very cold indeed (possibly a result of the weather or perhaps not being taken out of the fridge earlier) - it slightly spoiled our enjoyment as the quality of the cheese (and indeed the charcuterie) was top notch. I think it might be good in winter if a hot option was available - perhaps a baked camembert?

The wine list at Chalk is extremely well curated (including three Orange wines) and tasting notes and further information on the wines is provided. There is an 'Aperitif Menu' that's served Monday - Thursday 5 p.m. till close and Friday and Saturday 4-7. This offers a bottle of either Chin Chin Vinho Verde or Gran Cerdo Tinto Tempranillo at just £20 a bottle - amazing value for Richmond! Selected cocktails are also on the Aperitif menu - at £9. The wine list and the more extensive cocktail menu (at £14 each) also offers takeaway and delivery - perfect if you're having a quiet night in or hosting a dinner and fancy a professionally made creation (£25 for 300ml - three serves)

Chalk is the sort of place you might well pop into for a quick drink, but then find yourselves staying for quite a few more. It's very close to Richmond Theatre and The Orange Tree, so ideal for pre theatre food and drink too. It's open seven days a week, and they've chalked up a very successful addition to the Richmond social scene!!

Volunteer for the telephone friendship service

Just 30 minutes of your time a week could make a massive difference to an older person's life. If you're empathetic and good at talking on the phone, you could be a Telephone Friendship Service volunteer.

What is the telephone friendship service?

As people get older, some may find they spend more time on their own. This can sometimes feel lonely, boring or make people miss friends or family.

We offer free telephone friendship services for older people so they can enjoy chatting with someone over the phone, all from the comfort of your their home.



One of our services matches volunteers with older members of the public to have a weekly 30-minute chat together.

As a volunteer, you'd befriend someone who's 60 or over. It's a fun, safe, easy way to get to know someone new from the comfort of your own home. Lots of people tell us the chats are the highlight of their week.

If you'd like to make a difference to an older person's life, read through the rest of this page and see if it's the right opportunity for you.

What's great about becoming a telephone friend?

- It's a free, simple way to give something back through a weekly call to an older person.
- Our dedicated team will match you with someone who has shared interests.
- Your calls can make a huge difference to the happiness and wellbeing of an older person.
- We protect the safety of all volunteers and members by automatically connecting them with their telephone friend, which means no personal telephone numbers need to be exchanged.

How does it work?

1. **You sign up** and start your volunteer application online. This involves completing references, online training, passing an ID check and having an interview with our team.
2. **We match you** with a suitable older person based on your interests.
3. **Age UK will then connect you** with your telephone friend to begin your weekly calls.

What's expected of me?

We're looking for people who have excellent listening skills and enjoy a good phone call. You'll need to be able to show your telephone friend respect, patience, empathy and understanding. This is what we'd also expect from you:

- Making time for a 30-minute call on the same day and time each week.
- A commitment to volunteering with us for a minimum of one year.
- Agreeing to our [volunteer terms and conditions](#).
- Being kind and respectful to your telephone friend.
- Letting us know if you or your telephone friend need any support.

[Sign up now](#)





King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight

by James Rushbrooke

Questors Theatre Productions at the Judi Dench Playhouse, Ealing

This festive season has seen many productions breaking out from the strict pantomime straightjacket and have introduced creative and innovative ideas. Such is Questors' seasonal offering, *King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight*. In this original variation on the traditional panto theme, we witness a witty collusion between the mythical world of Camelot with that of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.



However, the play is not set in King Arthur's imaginary castle but in the humbler surroundings of W5. In Lord Drayton's court in Ealing the courtiers await the arrival of King Arthur and Guinevere's retinue, for the King is seeking the mystical Twelfth Knight of the Round Table.



Nothing is off-limits in the world of sixth century Britain. Shakespeare's shipwrecked twin (Viola) becomes Lord Drayton's daughter (Esme) who is convinced she could be the missing Twelfth (K)night (geddit!) of the Round Table. To help in the deception, Esme changes identity and cross-dresses as a boy and so follows a case of mistaken identity and magic potions to make you fall in love – oh, yes, it does!!

The versatile cast were supported by a children's ensemble, assorted woodland creatures and four puppeteers, masterfully operating various puppets, together with a magnificent model of a dragon. Their song and dance routines were among the highlights. Lyricist Helen Cooper's lyrics were ably meshed into the storyline and much credit must go to choreographer Sara Page for the dance routines. However, the number which raised the roof was the thumping rap performed by Russell Fleet's eccentric and scary Dark Lord. Fantastic staging, electrifying lighting and a powerful performance – simply a terrific production number.

James Goodden's dame was sheer perfection – never over-acting and always in control, while Kerri Logan's Morgana bewitched and dazzled. Alex Marker's laid-back interpretation of Merlin tested the elasticity of the fourth wall, as director Rory brought panto up close and personal to the audience.

King Arthur and the Twelfth Knight brings a refreshing and welcome change for a panto. If panto be the food of love, play on.



Read Steve Mackrell's review at www.markaspen.com/2022/12/22/king-a-12-kngt

Photography courtesy of Questors



Mother Goose

by Will Brenton

HEP at the Hackney Empire



When, in 1901, impresario, Oswald Stoll commissioned the design of the Hackney Empire, he wanted the most beautiful theatre in the world, so he turned to his architect Frank Matcham. Notwithstanding the [London Coliseum](#) or [Richmond Theatre](#), other Matcham masterpieces, it remains an impeccable example of its kind. Opened, it rapidly attracted well-known names such as Charlie Chaplin or Stan Laurel. But Stoll wanted the best pantomime performers, and for the Hackney Empire's first panto in 1902 he signed up Dan Leno, who had been wowing Christmas panto audiences at Drury Lane since 1888.



That first Hackney Empire panto was *Mother Goose*. The five-foot nothing Dan Leno created the concept of the Dame as we know it today. With exemplary physicality he would wrestle with live geese as part of his routine.

In celebration of the panto's 120th anniversary in the theatre, the Hackney Empire brings *Mother Goose* to the stage again this year. The Leno role (minus live geese) is played by Clive Rowe, who also directs the show, in his fifteenth Hackney Empire pantomime. His performance, balancing stumpey stridency with dainty dexterity, is masterful. Rowe's ten OTT costumes, created by Cleo Pettitt, include a model recreation of the Hackney Empire theatre ... with stage door derrière.

This *Mother Goose*, however, is very much 21st Century. We are in Hackneywood, where *Mother Goose* runs a beauty salon to primp and preen the wannabe stars, obsessed with celebrity. She is too kind-hearted though and the salon is going bust. Then her beloved pet goose Priscilla starts laying golden eggs



The baddies are equally 21st Century, as the Demon Queen plots to make everyone in Hackneywood a social media drone, zombified by their mobiles. Rebecca Parker plays the gorgeously ghastly villain with everyone in thrall to their phones. *Mother Goose* may have modern trappings, but it is the traditional panto developed in those 120 years. No wonder people are flocking to see it.

Read Quentin Weiver's review at www.markaspen.com/2022/12/04/mother-goose

Photography by Manuel Harlan

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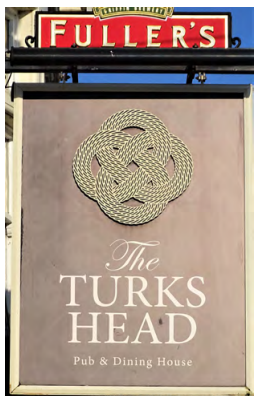


Doug Goodman resolves to visit every local pub in 2023

Our area is very well provided with pubs as I discovered on recent trips around Twickenham, Teddington and St. Margaret's. I counted nearly 40 pubs within walking distance, (more or less), from Twickenham's centre and plan to drink in each one in 2023. Right now pubs need our custom so support your local.

Many pubs have elaborate hanging signs and all have names. These commemorate famous people, great historical events or nearby places: it's well worth delving into their origins and history. See if you can pinpoint the location of each shown here. More pub signs will appear in the next Traveller's Tales and will include those in Teddington..... Cheers.

Just before Christmas a family lunch booked at a well-known pub in Sussex was a wash-out as the building had no water and was closed. A frantic search around the area took us to the Gardeners Arms at Ardingly. Without a reservation we were lucky to get a table near a log fire in very atmospheric surroundings. The choice of starters, mains and puddings was extensive. There was no wine list just a choice of house wine at £6.95 for a medium-size glass. Mulled wine was on the menu and its aromatic smell wafted around the dining room. A wide choice of local beers was also served. My main dish was camembert and fig tart which was easily the tastiest main course I've ever enjoyed. Camilla, the owner, received our congratulations to pass on to the chef. The two course lunch with wine, coffees and service was around £30 per person. Altogether it was a very enjoyable pre-Christmas treat. The Gardeners Arms big garden will be ideal in summer for open-air dining and for children to play in.





WIZ TALES: CHAD



One of the poorest countries in the world

Teresa Read

This week UNICEF highlighted the help they give to families forced to flee their homes; UNICEF provides essential health services for refugees in Chad.

UNICEF Overview:

The humanitarian situation in Chad is best described as a prolonged multidimensional crisis caused by displacement of people fleeing conflict in neighbouring countries, consistent food insecurity and high rates of malnutrition resulting from a conjunction of factors such as the economic crisis and natural hazards.

The people in Chad are also among the most affected by the global climate breakdown.

Chad receives economic aid from the United States, various international organizations and countries of the European Community. The European Community is one of the main humanitarian aid donors responding to the basic needs of internally displaced people, refugees and resident communities affected by multiple crises in Chad.

Chad is a landlocked country in Central Africa bordered by Cameroon, Nigeria, Niger, Libya, Sudan and the Central African Republic. The terrain consists of an arid central plain, desert in the north, mountains in the northwest and lowlands in the south. Lake Chad, to the south of the Sahara, is an important wetland and habitat for a number of species of birds.



Further information about Chad: <https://worldinfozone.com/facts.php?country=Chad>

St Mary's University

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI RIP

We were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of the Pope Emeritus, His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI. This news will be of great sadness to our University community, many of whom met and were directly impressed by the thoughtfulness and care Pope Benedict XVI demonstrated on his visit to the [University during his State Visit to the United Kingdom in 2010](#).



During his visit to the campus, Pope Benedict hosted three events for religious leaders and Catholic school children from across the country to share messages of love, dialogue and the importance of following the way of Christ.

His visit began with a Prayer Service in the University Chapel. During the service, Pope Benedict presented the University with a mosaic of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Baby Jesus. This is hung near the entrance to the University Chapel, a permanent reminder of the papal visit and a prompt to prayer and peaceful reflection.

Following Mass, Pope Benedict held [The Big Assembly](#) on what is now the Sir Mo Farah Athletics Track. This saw 3,500 school children from across the country host a school assembly to celebrate Catholic education in the UK and the outstanding work that takes place in Catholic schools, colleges, and higher education institutions across the country.

This event holds special significance for me as I had the honour of attending with a school group. I recall everyone at the event being deeply touched by the significance of the presence of the Holy Father at St Mary's. The event was relayed to Catholic schools across the country.

Pope Benedict's visit to St Mary's was concluded by his hosting an interfaith forum in the Waldegrave Drawing Room. This saw leaders of Christian denominations and other faiths including Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and

Sikhism come together. The Holy Father asked the forum to share his vision for [religious freedom to be respected throughout the world](#).

The papal visit has had a lasting legacy at the University. Although already engaged in interfaith dialogue, the visit gave new life to our mission in this area. The University regularly hosts guest lectures from faith leaders and religious experts, including the Ecumenical Patriarch His All Holiness Bartholomew I, former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland Richard Clark, and Baroness Sayeedi Warsi, amongst many others.

The University also established the [Benedict XVI Centre for Religion and Society](#) on the fifth anniversary of the visit. The Centre is an international hub for research and public engagement activities in the areas of religion and the social sciences, primarily economics, anthropology, sociology and political science. It regularly publishes research, which shapes the national debate on a range of issues including faith participation amongst the young, the impact of free school meals, and how chaplains support seafaring communities in the UK.

Most recently the University celebrated the tenth anniversary in 2020 of the Holy Father's visit to campus through [The Big Assembly 2020](#), which was celebrated by the University's Chancellor HE Cardinal Vincent Nichols. This special event gave the University a chance to reflect on the significance of our relationship with Pope Benedict XVI and to share the spirit of the message he shared with the crowd at the original Big Assembly with a new generation of school children.

In his address to schoolchildren at St. Mary's University, Pope Benedict XVI said: "When I invite you to become saints, I am asking you not to be content with second best. I am asking you not to pursue one limited goal and ignore all the others." Just as he invited others to do, the late Pope Emeritus devoted his life to Christ and His Church as an outstanding theologian, as an academic with an unswerving devotion to his students, and as a great pastor who ultimately became pope at a time of great challenges to the Church in the West. We pray for the repose of his eternal soul, and we continue to pray for his successor, Pope Francis.

This is a time of sadness but also of thanksgiving and gratitude for the gifts given to the Church through the ministry of Benedict XVI.



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New instrument will enable stable isotope measurements

NPL acquires new capability for isotope ratio measurements of atmospheric greenhouse gases

Anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions are driving climate change. To effectively mitigate against the effects of climate change and enable a transition to a carbon neutral economy, it is important to distinguish between the contribution of different anthropogenic activities and industrial sectors.

Scientists from the Gas Metrology & Emissions and Atmospheric Metrology Group at NPL have acquired a new instrument which will allow them to perform stable isotope measurements with improved precision and produce new gas reference materials for the isotopic composition of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane (CH₄) in air mixtures.

Each source of atmospheric greenhouse gases, such as the combustion of fossil fuels or land-use changes, emits gases with a very specific isotopic signature, describing very small differences in the atomic mass of otherwise identical gas molecules. The new instrument at NPL, an Isotope Ratio Mass Spectrometer (IRMS), will be able to measure these differences in mass to the required precision. First steps will be to ensure measurements using the NPL IRMS are traceable to international measurement scales, with NPL already participating in international comparison activities to establish this global comparability. International collaboration is crucial to ensure that all measurements around the world are comparable, particularly when performing measurements to address the global problem of climate change.

This research will fill an existing traceability gap in the measurement of isotopic composition of carbon dioxide and methane by providing new infrastructure for delivering gaseous carbon dioxide and methane reference materials and methods. The reference materials will enable the dissemination of traceable isotope ratio measurements to monitoring sites and can be used to establish measurement networks that can provide the data required to support inventory verification targets and enable pledges of emissions reductions to be demonstrated.

Christoph Nehrbass-Ahles, Senior Research Scientist, NPL, and lead scientist on this project said: “With this new capability NPL will underpin the UK’s efforts to achieve Net Zero by 2050 and take a leading role in ensuring traceability of greenhouse gas isotope ratio measurements for the global measurement community.”

Eric Mussell Webber, Higher Research Scientist, NPL, said: “This instrument is a key step in isotope ratio metrology and measurements for climate monitoring at NPL. Established infrastructure for preparing gas reference materials, coupled with the analytical precision of the IRMS, will help NPL push forward the science in the fight against climate change.”



Match Preview: West Ham

Team news, analysis, match officials and more. Here's everything you need to know ahead of Brentford's FA Cup third-round tie against West Ham United

Written by Brentford Football Club

Brentford face a familiar foe on Saturday, West Ham United heading across the capital just eight days on from our 2-0 Premier League victory at London Stadium.

The Hammers' new year's fixture saw them draw at Leeds United on Wednesday night while the Bees opened 2023 with a 3-1 win over Liverpool. But now Premier League points take a back seat as it's Emirates FA Cup progress which is the order of the day.

The Opposition West Ham United

West Ham United have finished sixth and seventh in the last two seasons, underlining the sterling work done by David Moyes behind the scenes.

The Hammers even progressed to the Europa League semi-final last term – the first time they had reached the final four of a European competition since finishing as runners-up in the 1975/76 European Cup Winners' Cup.



Moyes and Co had to settle for a place in the Conference League this time around, but the fact they had strengthened in multiple areas suggested fans were in for another exhilarating ride.

Marquee signing Gianluca Scamacca was brought in to take pressure off Michail Antonio up front and Maxwell Cornet looked sure to cause a stir on the opposite flank to Jarrod Bowen.

But West Ham have not been able to carry their previous momentum into this season – so far, at least.

The Hammers are sat 17th in the Premier League table. They were knocked out of the Carabao Cup by Championship side Blackburn Rovers before the World Cup break, too. Given their league form, however, that could well be a blessing in disguise.

All is not lost, though. In the Conference League, they progressed to the knockout stages by way of six straight wins and a high expected points tally of 24.87 – which would place them in

the top 10 of the Premier League – suggests they have simply not been getting the rub of the green.

Moyes himself does not seem to be particularly concerned about West Ham’s plight this term, either. Speaking after his side returned to domestic action with a 3-1 defeat to Arsenal on Boxing Day, the Scot told Amazon Prime Sport: “I have been looking upwards. We have good players and ones who can compete right at the top.

“We need to start turning performances into points and there have been other games where we should have taken more from them.”

On the face of it, there do appear to be several teams – with far less well-equipped squads – more likely to be facing a relegation battle than the Hammers, so while they cannot afford to be complacent, they can probably dedicate a reasonable amount of attention to FA Cup progress.

It is, as Jonty Colman tells us in [Hot off the Press](#), likely to be their only viable route back into Europe, after all.

The Gameplan

With *football.london* journalist Jonty Colman

“It’s an interesting one actually because, at the start of the season, Moyes did allude to the fact he wanted to do better in the domestic cup competitions; last season it was fifth round of the FA Cup and quarter-finals of the Carabao Cup.

“I think there’s going to be a bit of dilemma in Moyes’ mind because he has said he wants to do well in the cups, but West Ham are already out of the Carabao Cup and, considering their league form, this is one of their best avenues to get into Europe.”

[Read the full interview with Jonty Colman here](#)

Team News

Frank: ‘Schade in squad’

Kevin Schade will be involved in a Brentford squad for the first time tomorrow while Kristoffer Ajer is also set for a return.

Ivan Toney (muscle), Shandon Baptiste (groin), Frank Onyeka (hamstring), Pontus Jansson (hamstring) and Aaron Hickey (ankle) will miss out.

West Ham will remain without Maxwell Cornet and Kurt Zouma but David Moyes otherwise has a fully fit squad to choose from.



England coaching update

Harlequins coach Nick Evans will join the England coaching staff for the upcoming 2023 Guinness Six Nations.

Evans will work as attack coach during the tournament which begins next month.

A former New Zealand international, Evans made his debut for the All Blacks against England in 2004 and went on to represent his country in 16 Test matches. He played 44 matches in Super Rugby for the Highlanders and the Blues.



Evans then moved to Harlequins in 2008, where he went on to represent on 208 occasions, winning the European Challenge Cup in 2011 and the Premiership in 2012.

He retired from playing and moved into coaching in 2017, becoming Harlequins' attack coach, once again helping the club win the Gallagher Premiership in 2021.

Evans will join the coaching team for the preparation for England's opening game of the Guinness Six Nations – the historic Calcutta Cup fixture against Scotland at Twickenham Stadium on Saturday 4 February (4.45pm KO).

England head coach Steve Borthwick said: "I am delighted that Nick is joining our team ahead of the Six Nations.

"Nick brings with him a wealth of different experiences as a player and coach, which will be incredibly valuable to the growth of our team.

"I know that Nick understands the pride and responsibility that comes with representing your country.

"We aim to build an England team that our nation can be proud of, and I know that our supporters will be very excited by what Nick can bring to our side.

"We'd particularly like to thank Harlequins for their support in allowing Nick to work with us during this period. It's a great example of club and country working together."



HOUSE PRICE CRASH PREDICTED BY MANY LOOKS INCREASINGLY UNLIKELY

THE house price crash many predicted before Christmas is now highly unlikely to happen, a leading property association has claimed.

There were widespread fears only weeks ago that the sector faced being decimated over coming months.

But the National Association of Property Buyers say these fears now seem to be misguided.

Spokesman Jonathan Rolande said: "Although the outlook for 2023 in terms of house prices is far from rosy, the price crash, much feared by many, and wished for by a few, seems increasingly unlikely to happen.

"It is almost certain that prices will continue to fall during the first three to six months of the year. But, if the economic and political landscape remains relatively stable, we may see a slight recovery in the second half of the year, meaning we could end 2023 with prices back around where they were at the beginning of 2022.

"We need to be clear, we are not yet on safe ground. The market still has a long way to go before it steadies and even longer before prices begin to lift again. And those waiting for the bounce will need to be patient."

Explaining why he felt the market has the potential to bounce back he continued: "There are a number of factors at play here. Rocketing interest rates, a cost of living crisis, a pandemic, and mortgage products are being withdrawn. The list goes on and yet we have not seen a price freefall. Rates have increased but not to levels that crippled borrowers, even though they were very unwelcome especially as other household costs were rising too.

"With most people on a fixed rate loan, the effect was diluted – we didn't see all mortgages shooting up in price overnight. The reduction in long-term rates has helped too, they are still much higher than a year ago but a downward trajectory breeds consumer and lender confidence."

Mr Rolande added: "Lenders have held their nerve too. Thanks to lower percentage lending for the last decade or so, their exposure to risk is lower than it was in previous dips meaning the risk of repossession is far less.

"The general shortage of available property, exacerbated by the suspension of construction work during the pandemic, the frenzy to buy holiday homes and let property means that despite suppressed demand, there is still a chronic shortage of property – that will shore up prices."



Chair of Migration Watch Alp Mehmet reacts to authorities warning that migrant Channel crossings could double in 2023

THE chair of Migration Watch has criticised the authorities for not deporting migrants who attempt to enter the UK illegally.

Alp Mehmet told GB News this would send the clearest and most direct message to those planning to try and make crossings.

He told Stephen Dixon: *“There’s no single, simple, answer or solution. Be it Rwanda or be it keeping them in camps rather than hotels. You know, all these things will contribute towards making it less attractive to make your way here. However, in order to get on top of this problem, the single most important thing to do, having held on to people and dealt with them quickly, is to remove them. And that is what’s not happening at the moment. That is why the traffickers are able to sell a package which involves getting to the UK and not being removed. And, ultimately, being allowed to stay indefinitely.”*

His comments come as the former Director General of Border Force called on the Government to get far tougher with Channel migrants who are abusing the UK asylum system.

Tony Smith told GB News the Home Secretary needs to introduce a “detention and fast-track removal process” to get a proper grip on the small boats’ crisis.

He said that detaining those with no obvious claim to asylum, and getting them deported from the country more rapidly, would be a more effective way of helping break the business model of the people smugglers.

Those criminal gangs sent 45,756 people across the English Channel in 2022.

Although French authorities managed to prevent more than 32,000 people leaving the beaches of Normandy over the past year, the vast majority simply regrouped and tried again.

Tony Smith said that current government policies were making no impact on the numbers attempting the dangerous journey, and predicted the year ahead would see even more people cross the Channel.

He told GB News: *“I don’t think we’ve peaked, I’m afraid.*

“I think this may continue if we can’t start showing some results, which means sending people back somewhere.

“At the moment, everybody still knows really, you’ve just got to get into a dingy, get into British territorial waters and it’s very unlikely you’re going to be removed from the UK”

The former Border Force boss said the only real deterrent for those attempting the crossing would be the knowledge that many would be detained on arrival and on a fast-track back out of the UK.

“We really need to start removing people from our territory,” Mr Smith continued.

“If they realise that they’re spending all this time, effort and money paying human traffickers to get to the country, and then they find within a couple of weeks actually they’re back where they started from... then I think that will be the biggest deterrent of all.”

Last month, the Prime Minister announced a multi-pronged plan he said would help tackle the small boats crisis.

The Royal Navy will hand responsibility for tackling Channel migrants back to the Home Office later this month, after eight months heading up that operation.

A new Small Boats Operational Command will take over, led by Border Force, but supported by the military and

the National Crime Agency.

The plan will also see the Government push ahead with its Rwanda policy, after the High Court ruled in December that the plan to process asylum seekers in the African nation was lawful.

However, the ruling is likely to be the subject of further appeals by migrant charities and human rights groups.

Although the Rwanda plan was originally announced by former Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his then Home Secretary Priti Patel in April last year, no asylum seekers flights have left the UK for Kigali.

Of the almost 46,000 people who crossed the English Channel last year, 13,000 were from Albania.

The UK government has recently signed a new deal with Albania to speed up the removal of asylum seekers from that nation.

Ministers here believe the vast majority of those leaving the peaceful western Balkans nation can have no legitimate claim to asylum.

Home Secretary Suella Braverman also accused many Albanians, who claim to have been trafficked to the UK against their will, of “gaming the system.”

But despite the latest deal with Tirana, only a handful of Albanians who crossed the English Channel in small boats, have been returned to their home country.

Tony Smith believes it should be possible to establish much more quickly those who clearly do not have a legitimate claim to enter the asylum system.

He believes that a tougher and more effective plan would be to detain those individuals, to prevent them disappearing into the illegal economy, and then getting them removed as quickly as possible.

And he wants to see that approach applied to all those quickly assessed as having no legitimate asylum claim, not just Albanians.

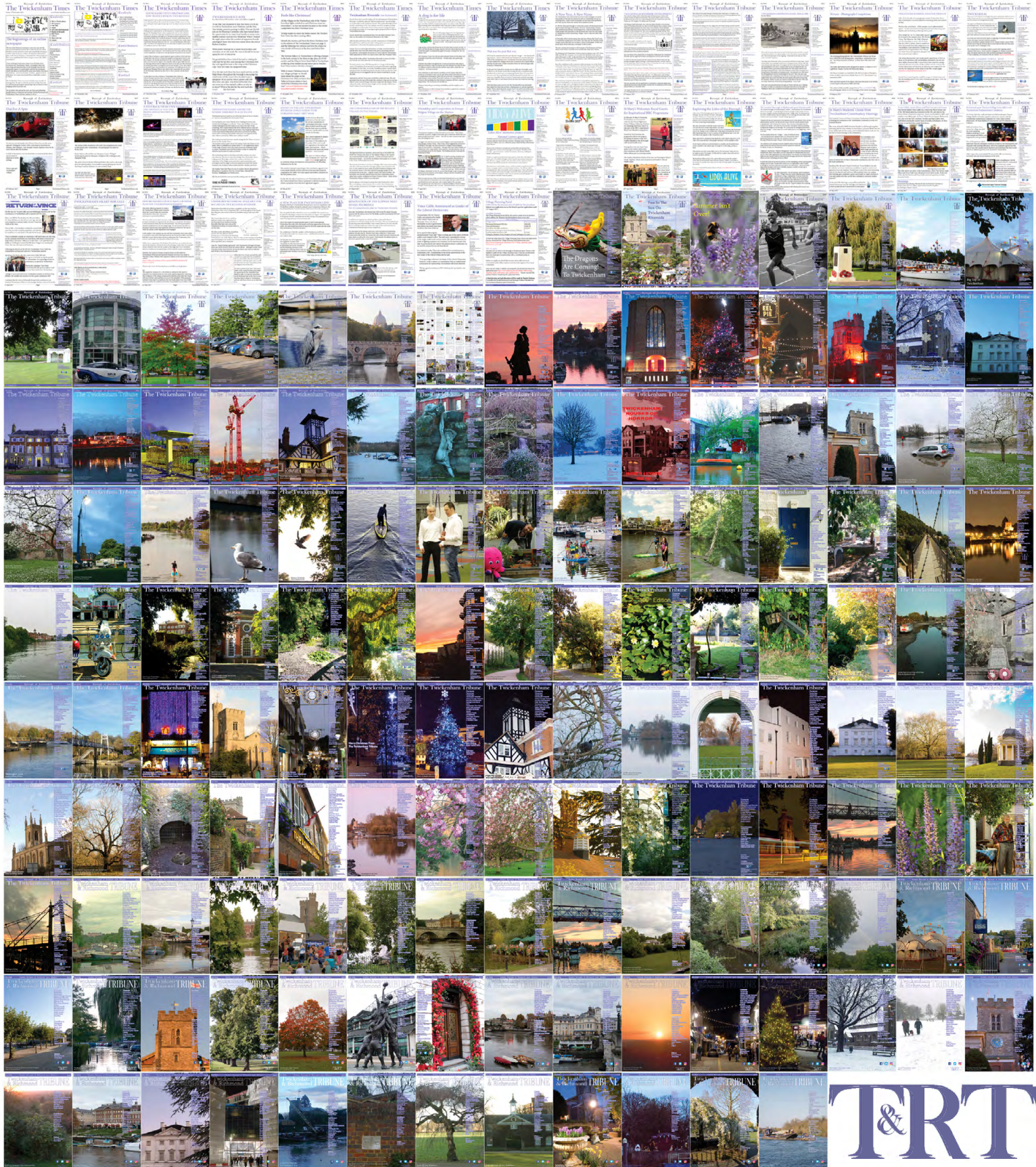
“We’ve got to get into detaining people when they arrive here who are manifestly unfounded, abusing the system. Detaining them for only a limited period. No one wants to lock people up for months and months. But enough time to get all the legal barriers dealt with quickly under a detention and fast-track process and start seeing removals. We’ve done it before. We did it in the UK Border Agency when I was there. A better designed fast-track process, and we did deliver significant removals, and that’s the best way of getting control of this.”

Conservative MP James Daly, who sits on the Home Affairs and Justice Committees, believes that, despite any obvious momentum, Rishi Sunak’s government has the right plans in place now to tackle the Channel Migrant crisis.

“I genuinely think things have changed. So, I think this is the moment where we can do something about it. The question which people will judge us on, is that we should have done this three years ago. We knew this was coming. We knew these numbers were coming, and it’s not acceptable. But I want to look forward. We’ve got the right policies and ministers in place, we’re going to deliver, in my view. Having had talks with various ministers, I think we’re in a good place to deal with it.”

A Government spokesperson said: “The global migration crisis is causing an unprecedented strain on our asylum system. Nobody should put their lives at risk by taking dangerous and illegal journeys. We will go further to tackle the gangs driving this, using every tool at our disposal to deter illegal migration and disrupt the business model of people smugglers.”

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